

**AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS HELD IN AND FOR GADSDEN
COUNTY, FLORIDA ON AUGUST 6, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M.,
THE FOLLOWING PROCEEDING WAS HAD, VIZ:**

Present: Ronterious Green, Chair, District 5
Alonzetta Simpkins, Vice-Chair, District 2
Eric Hinson, District 1
Kimblin NeSmith, District 3
Brenda Holt, District 4
Edward J. Dixon, County Administrator
Clayton Knowles, County Attorney
Adriana Quijada, Deputy Clerk

Call to Order, Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. Chair provided invocation and led into Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Hinson appeared at 6:02 p.m.

Amendments and Approval of Agenda

Mr. Dixon stated to pull items 2 and 21.

Mr. Dixon requested to add under Consent:

21a. Approval of Spooner Road – Change Order 01

**COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS AMENDED AND
COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.**

Awards, Presentations, and Appearances

1. Presentation on Disaster Preparedness for Small Business

Mr. Davis appeared before the Board and stated he was representing the Florida Disaster Declaration for Severe Storm, Winds, and Tornadoes. He stated he was here for the economic injury loan. It deals with financial damage. Their deadline is March 7, 2025.

Commissioner Hinson asked if they were a private company. Mr. Davis stated no, this was a small business administration.

Chair Green asked if they could assist with the tornado that happened in May. Mr. Davis stated this disaster declaration is for May 10, which deals with the tornado.

2. Recognition of Diane Williams-Cox

Item pulled.

Consent

Commissioner NeSmith asked to pull items 7, 8, 9 and 10.

Commissioner Simpkins asked to pull items 16, 18, 19, and 20.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA WITH THE ABOVE EXCEPTIONS AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

3. Ratification Memo

4. BOCC Meeting/Workshop Minutes:

- a. May 11, 2024, Emergency Meeting
- b. May 30, 2024, 1st Budget Workshop
- c. June 4, 2024, Regular BOCC Meeting
- d. June 11, 2024, 2nd Budget Workshop
- e. June 12, 2024, Boys and Girls Club Workshop
- f. June 18, 2024, Regular BOCC Meeting
- g. July 1, 2024, 3rd Budget Workshop

5. Approval of Signatures for Special Assessment Liens – State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP)

6. Approval and Signatures for Satisfaction of Special Assessment Lien

~~7. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Gadsden Express Services from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027~~

~~8. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Gadsden Connector Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027~~

~~9. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Quincy Shuttle Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027~~

~~10. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Havana Shuttle Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027~~

11. Re-appointment to the CareerSource Capital Region Board

12. Public Officials Bond Review

- 13. Approval of the revised Lease Agreement between the Gadsden County BOCC and the St. Hebron AME Church and St. Matthews Primitive Baptist Church as owners of a 2.0 +/- acre parcel of land to be used as a County Park**
- 14. Approval of Elderly Affairs to become Host Agent for National Caucus and Center on Black Aging Senior Community Service Employment Program**
- 15. Approval of Supplemental Agreement South Adams Street Sidewalk**
- 16. Approval of Separation Agreement**
- 17. Approval of Interlocal Fire Agreement with the Town of Havana**
- 18. Approval of the Contract with Graybelle Construction, LLC. Pursuant to the Award of ITB 24-06 Rebid**
- 19. Approval of Change Order 1 to the Contract with Graybelle Construction, LLC. Pursuant to the Award of ITB 24-06 Rebid**
- 20. Approval of the CDBG-CV Grant Letter of Financial Commitment**
- 21. Approval of Blue Line Ordinance Letters**
- 21a. Approval of Spooner Road – Change Order 01**

Items Pulled for Discussion

- 7. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Gadsden Express Services from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027**

Commissioner NeSmith stated when he read the information in the booklet, he saw that item 7,8,9, and 10 were an expense to the county. Mr. Dixon stated items 7 and 8 are county funded. Items 9 and 10 are through a match with Star Metro. It is a reimbursement program for those matches.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

- 8. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Gadsden Connector Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027**

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

9. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Quincy Shuttle Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

10. Approval of Transportation Agreement between the Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners and Big Bend Transit, Inc. to Provide the Havana Shuttle Bus Service from October 1, 2024 through September 30, 2027

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

16. Approval of Separation Agreement

Commissioner Simpkins stated this item should be under general business not consent. She asked the County Attorney if he was a part of the conversation regarding this agreement. Mr. Knowles stated he received it about 2 weeks ago but it came signed already by Ms. Daniels. He did not know how it got to this point.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she wanted to make sure they were not setting a precedent. Mr. Dixon stated anytime a senior employment changes hands, there ought to be some type of separation agreement. In his experience, this was how it was handled.

Commissioner Simpkins did not think they were being fiscally responsible. She stated the Attorney was not a part of this, it was already signed when he got it. Commissioner Simpkins stated she has not been on this board for 2 years yet, and this was the third time they were paying out in this small county as it relates to employees and their release.

Commissioner Hinson stated it was great to table this. They need to meet and discuss this. Commissioner Holt stated this was not the only time they paid severance pay and it will not be the last.

Chair Green stated this could cost them more if they decide to go in a different direction.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND CHAIR GREEN MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 2-3 AND THE ITEM WAS NOT PASSED. COMMISSIONER HINSON, COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS, AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH OPPOSED THE MOTION.

18. Approval of the Contract with Graybelle Construction, LLC. Pursuant to the Award of ITB 24-06 Rebid

Commissioner Simpkins asked the Attorney if the amount was standard. Mr. Knowles stated this was ensuring completion and if they do not, the insurer will pay the county for non-completion within the time frame. He stated this was standard. Mr. Morris stated it was a requirement for the performance

bond. Commissioner Simpkins stated any task/change orders need to come before the board for approval.

Commissioner Holt asked about the deadline of the grant and Mr. Morris stated they have already requested an extension.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if they were confident to complete the project by the deadline. The representative from Graybelle stated they were confident.

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE ITEM WITH CHANGES THAT ALL CHANGE ORDERS COME BEFORE THE BOARD, ABOVE THE 1.6, AND TO ADD THE PERFORMANCE BOND. COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

19. Approval of Change Order 1 to the Contract with Graybelle Construction, LLC. Pursuant to the Award of ITB 24-06 Rebid

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

20. Approval of the CDBG-CV Grant Letter of Financial Commitment

COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Citizens Requesting to be Heard on Non-Agenda Items (3-Minute Limit)

The Gadsden County Board of County Commissioners welcomes and encourages public participation at all meetings of the Board. Citizens are free to speak for up to three (3) minutes on non-agenda items. Public comments and participation are also encouraged for items on the agenda. Additionally, if you are unable to attend a meeting in person, comments from the Public can also be submitted via email to CitizensToBeHeard@gadsdencountyfl.gov until noon on the date of the meeting. Comments submitted after the deadline, but prior to the meeting, will be added to the official record, but the County cannot guarantee that Commissioners and staff will have adequate time to review comments prior to the meeting. Citizens are further encouraged to participate on the County's website at www.gadsdencountyfl.gov.

Chair Green read aloud the above statement.

MT Thomas, 363 E Crawford St

Mr. Thomas appeared before the Board. He stated he was the Executive Director for AMI Kids Gadsden. They are an after-school program where they offer services for youth who are in a prevention program.

Commissioner Simpkins asked if they serve students that have encountered the law. Mr. Thomas stated they welcome them all.

Amy Williams

Ms. Williams appeared before the Board and stated she was here to support Kate McFall.

Kate McFall, 1206 Walton Dr. Tallahassee FL.

Ms. McFall appeared before the Board to discuss animal services. She stated she came to say thank you to the Commissioners. Gadsden County's Animal Services have made a significant progress in recent months. She hoped they will consider to accept the \$90,000 from Jacksonville Humane.

Public Hearing

22. (Quasi-Judicial) – WSN Construction Site Improvements Conceptual/Preliminary Site Plan (SP 2024-01)

Ms. Andrews appeared before the Board and went through the item. WSN Construction, LLC (applicant), represented by Joseph Legacy (Dewberry Engineering, Inc.), agent, has submitted a site plan review application for a construction office and storage area for WSN Construction LLC. Proposed buildings for the site are an office and pole barn. The site located on Florida-Georgia Parkway (State Road 63/ U.S. Highway 27) has historically been vacant and is designated as Commercial on the Gadsden County Future Land Use Map.

Michael Freeman appeared before the Board. Chair Green asked if he was willing to make the adjustments that the Planning Commission requested. Mr. Freeman stated yes.

Commissioner Holt asked what the development was for and Mr. Freeman stated it was for a general construction office.

Chair Green stepped out at 7:42 p.m.

Chair Green returned at 7:44 p.m.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

23. (Quasi-Judicial) – Talquin Electric Cooperative (TEC) Mutual Aid Staging and Coordination Facility Gadsden County Conceptual/Preliminary Site Plan (SP 2024-02)

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and Ms. Andrews appeared before the Board. Talquin Electric Cooperative, Inc., represented by Woods Waddle has submitted a site plan review application to construct a Mutual Aid Staging and Coordination Facility. Proposed buildings for the site are a 5,000 square foot office building, a 10,000 square foot training building, and 4,600 square feet of future expansions. The site located at 30270 Blue Star Highway (U.S. Highway 90) has historically been and is currently used for Utilities and is designated as Agriculture-3 on the Gadsden County Future Land Use Map. The property use designated by the Gadsden County Property Appraiser is "Utilities," and this project intends to maintain that use.

Woods Waddle appeared before the Board. Chair Green asked if they were willing to abide by the requests from the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Waddle stated yes, they have already begun to adjust their plans accordingly.

Commissioner Holt asked about homes near the property and Mr. Waddle stated there were none.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

24. Approval of Resolution 202-030 and Budget Amendment for FY 2023-2024

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

General Business

25. Seeking Board Direction Regarding RFP 24-05 Legal Services

Mr. Dixon went through the item. He stated the staff has opened the four proposals received, which were from The Law Offices of Craig J. Brown, PA, Williams Law Group, Clayton Knowles, QLLC, and Law Office of John Reid.

Chair Green stated they are currently on a month-to-month contract now; they need to have an open discussion publicly and have a special meeting. Commissioner Holt stated they should look over the package and each Commissioner choose their top 2 and submit it in writing to staff.

Chair Green stated he would like to interview all 4. That was his personal opinion. Commissioner NeSmith stated he would like to also interview all 4 candidates. He asked if there were preset questions that they already have. Chair Green stated yes, they could also add their own questions.

Ms. Burroughs appeared before the Board. She recommended that they submit their questions so they could add those to the standard list of questions.

Mr. Knowles stated the RFP has a scoring criteria in it. To avoid any appearance of impropriety, he suggested that they go with what they have in the RFP. Commissioner NeSmith stated he has not had a chance to look at the RFP. He asked to get a copy of the process.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she had a problem with this – she did not know what was on the RFP; she was not in the loop. Based on the scoring, is there any room for interview questions? She stated this was not a sense of emergency, she wanted time to go through that information and each candidate's proposal.

Chair Green asked if they notified firms that did not meet the procurement policies and Mr. Dixon stated yes.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if the information in the RFP came from a policy that already existed. Mr. Knowles stated he was not in the loop. Mr. Dixon stated they created the RFP based on their policy and suggestions.

Commissioner Holt stated they have done interviews on administrator and law firms. Those categories were the same on experience.

Commissioner Hinson stated they used to have workshops to get things together and then they bid out. He stated they should have a workshop after the budget hearing in September.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she agreed with Commissioner Hinson, budget is most important right now. This was not an emergency. She did not have a clear understanding of how this process will work and still has questions on this item. There are things more pressing and they need to slow down. They have time to go over this information.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO LOOK OVER THE INFORMATION AND SET PRIORITIES AND MEET AND DECIDE ON A LAW FIRM WITHIN 30 DAYS. COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 3-2 TO APPROVE THE MOTION. COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS AND COMMISSIONER HINSON OPPOSED.

26. Approval of Resolution 2024-028 Grant Budget Amendment for FY2024

Mr. Dixon presented the above item and went through the budget amendments.

Commissioner Hinson asked the County Administrator about Iron Bridge Road. Are they re-surfacing the whole area? Mr. Dixon stated this was just adding some money. Curtis Young appeared. Mr. Dixon stated he will give him more information in the comments section.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

27. Approval of Budget Amendment for FY 2023-2024 – Summer Youth

Mr. Dixon presented.

Chair Green stated this is a bill they need to pay; it was not necessary to spend 20 minutes discussing this. They would need to make necessary adjustments in the future.

Commissioner Hinson asked how many students they hired and Mr. Dixon stated 300.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

28. Approval of Policy Number 2024-003; Uniform Policy and Procedures for Employees Not Provided with Custom Uniforms

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

Chair Green asked about the cost and Mr. Dixon stated \$3,500.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER NESMITH MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

29. Approval of Health Insurance Rates

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

Commissioner Simpkins asked who was the insurance committee. Mr. Dixon stated all of the constitutionals and a staff member. Commissioner Simpkins asked if they even presented other insurance companies so they could look at quotes. Mr. Dixon stated the Sheriff went with UnitedHealth, but Capital Health Plan has all the doctors they were used to. The Sheriff was considering going back with CHP.

Chair Green asked about the deadline to approve the contract – he would like to see comparisons of insurance companies. It could be more competitive if they consider others. Mr. Dixon stated it would be effective 10/1/2024 and due 9/15/2024.

Commissioner Simpkins stated she was requesting a meeting with CHP. Gadsden County needs to demand service because they are providing insurance for all government entities here. Chair Green mentioned having a workshop with other entities that are utilizing their services as well.

COMMISSIONER HOLT MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

30. Approval to Accept Donation of Property

Mr. Dixon presented the above item.

COMMISSIONER HINSON MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THIS ITEM AND COMMISSIONER SIMPKINS MADE THE SECOND. THE BOARD VOTED 5-0 TO APPROVE.

Clerk of Court

31. No Updates

County Administrator

32. Mr. Dixon stated they met with the DOT District Secretary. They had a conversation about the development of bigger roads to get to open spaces. He mentioned that Cane Creek Bridge has now been funded to be repaired.

Commissioner NeSmith stepped out at 9:12 p.m.

County Attorney

33. Mr. Knowles thanked everyone for condolences on his uncle's passing and gave funeral information.

34. Discussion Items by Commissioners

Commissioner Eric F. Hinson, District 1

Commissioner Hinson asked when does Open Enrollment end and Mr. Dixon stated tomorrow.

Commissioner NeSmith returned at 9:15 p.m.

Commissioner Hinson stated he was hosting the Community Resource fair.

Commissioner Kimblin E. NeSmith, J.D., District 3

Commissioner NeSmith asked the County Administrator what happened with their July trip to Golden Triangle. Mr. Dixon stated he will have an answer for him.

Commissioner NeSmith asked the cost to repair the Cane Creek bridge and Mr. Dixon did not have an answer yet.

Commissioner NeSmith asked Mr. Dixon if he has sent the list of all opportunities to enhance their revenue. Mr. Dixon stated they submitted the revenue opportunities to him and it was in the budget.

Commissioner NeSmith asked if they have a schedule to service all of their county properties. Mr. Dixon stated they do not have a schedule yet, they have re-tooled facilities and moved them under the Building Official.

Commissioner NeSmith asked to have a workshop on severance packages. Mr. Knowles stated as long as it was public.

Commissioner NeSmith asked about Aspalaga Road. Mr. Dixon stated it was not on the list.

Commissioner Brenda A. Holt, District 4

Commissioner Holt mentioned parking in the back and fencing. Mr. Dixon stated they have looked at the design and they have a proposal. They want to light the parking lot up and add cameras.

Commissioner Holt stated she would like for item 13 be brought back for discussion because it was a lease. She stated she failed to ask some questions.

Commissioner Alonzetta Simpkins, District 2

Commissioner Simpkins thanked everyone for the back-to-school drive.

Commissioner Simpkins requested that at each meeting, presentations from departments with updates. On a quarterly basis, she would like to have the actuals on the budget.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned Scott Town Park. She wanted to know where they were at with that park and if the Parks and Recreation Board have met.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned Dog Town Road. Curtis Young appeared and stated it was at 60% design.

Commissioner Simpkins mentioned the Neighborhood Clinic. Mr. Morris stated they have received bids. There are 5 units needing to be replaced. He needed to consult with budget to make sure they have the funding.

Commissioner Simpkins asked about the policy as it relates to the advertised salary and then the hiring salary. Mr. Dixon stated they try to advertise at the policy based on the new comp plan that

they have but even with that, they found that the selections they were getting are just not there. They certainly have had to come back and review what they were paying people.

Commissioner NeSmith stepped out at 10:01 p.m.

Commissioner Ronterious Green, District 5

Chair Green asked for an update on the Boys & Girls Club. Mr. Dixon stated they have not yet signed the lease agreement. Mr. Knowles stated they have a meeting on Thursday with Mr. Nixon and Mr. Roberts to discuss the lease agreement and work through the concerns that the county has.

Commissioner NeSmith returned at 10:02 p.m.

Chair Green asked for the citizens traveling on Spooner Road to be careful as they are making updates and changes to that road.

Chair Green mentioned printing and stated there was a lot of paper being used for the agendas. He stated they are in a century where technology is very savvy and they should start utilizing iPads or laptops.

Motion to Adjourn

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD, CHAIR GREEN DECLARED THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:08 PM.

GADSDEN COUNTY, FLORIDA

**Ronterious Green, Chair
Board of County Commissioners**

ATTEST:

NICHOLAS THOMAS, Clerk